1: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938) 1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

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II. THE GENESIS OF A VILLAGE
Boys' huts built on the edge of their fathers' village

[FACING p. 19]

1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938) 1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

591 Before the establishment of peace by European authority, however, cattle were commonly herded by young men, armed, and
231 only the calves were entrusted to boys, who herded them near
857 the homesteads; therefore moving to a boys' village did not coincide with the change of occupation. Even to-day it is not uncommon for some boys who have reached puberty to be found herding cattle. One we knew herded his father's cattle although he had reached puberty, because he had no younger brothers old enough to take over, and there were only five or six boys in his herd-group altogether. There are also cases where special circumstances put the age of moving later. In one age-village the boys leave home a little later than usual because there are leopards about and it is dangerous for small boys to walk from the village of their fathers to that of the boys, after dark.

857 When a number of the sons of a village of married men have reached the right age, their fathers give them a piece of land to
342 one side of the parent village on which to build. There they build little huts of reeds for themselves, sufficiently well thatched to keep out the heavy rain, and there they sleep (*vide* Plate II). The building of the huts on this land begins in a playful manner, before the boys move. While they are still herding cows and sleeping at home they build miniature huts there in their spare time, but do not sleep in them. When they move they build slightly more substantial huts with better thatch. At the beginning, when a group of boys starts a new village, or when boys join one already formed, they do not all have huts for themselves: two or three friends share a hut. But later, as they grow older, each builds for himself.

857 Until he marries each boy hoes his father's fields in his father's
264 village and eats food cooked by his own mother at his father's
571 house, but he sleeps with his friends. Thus between the time when he leaves home and his marriage each is a member of two villages: economically he still belongs to that of his father; socially to that of his own contemporaries. Though bachelors eat at their parents' home, it is very rarely that they do not eat in the company of their own friends. A bachelor does not simply go home to eat by himself, but a group of bachelors, friends living in the same boys' village, go round together eating at the house of each one's mother in turn.

621 In an age-village of married men there are always several
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1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

"Ha! what's this?" They were burned; so they said: "These are chiefs because they brought this fire." It is this they remember, even to-day. . . .' And another informant explained: 'The fire means (*kukuti*) that a new chief has come, he brings fire, we throw away the old fire in the house.'

Having lighted their fires the young men cut bamboos and build temporary shelters for themselves, making one or more huts according to their numbers. It is forbidden for them to sleep in old huts, nor may they build on the site on which they lived as boys. Usually their first huts are on what was formerly pasture land, and later their fathers move aside to make room for the new generation. On the new site the two senior headmen of the new chief, together with a doctor, plant with magical ritual two branches of a *ficus* (known in Nyakyusa as *iliyabe*)—a species which is important economically since the bark of saplings provides the traditional dress of Nyakyusa women. These trees, known as *ulupando* and *umpandapanda*, are planted where the future boundary will run between the two halves of the young chief's country, and the senior headman (who is leader of the senior half of the country) builds his house near where the *ulupando* has been planted. He and his colleague, together with the doctor, proceed, after planting the trees, to set up the hearth-stones of his hut. Again magic is performed. Nyakyusa informants were not agreed as to the symbolism of these trees, as they were about the symbolism of the new fire. The root *ukupanda* means to plant a crop, or to set up, or establish the hearth-stones of a house; it is used also for establishing, or treating, with medicines. Some informants interpreted the *ulupando* as the chief and *umpandapanda* as his wife, saying: 'We are planting the chief and his wife.' Others said that the two trees represented the two senior headmen of the country, another that they represented the chief's two senior wives. What is certain is that *ulupando* is regarded as more important than *umpandapanda* and that both are taboo. No one may cut the trees. If anyone breaks the taboo it is believed that lions and leopards (closely associated with chiefs) will roar at night, and treatment by a doctor will be necessary to still them. It is also widely believed that the strength of the chief is associated with the growth of the trees. 'If these trees go dry the reign will not be successful, the chief will be defeated in war. If they flourish and grow the reign will be successful, the chief is

1: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938) 1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

621 643 764 [764] a ruler.' It is relevant to add that cuttings of this tree strike easily in the soil and climate of Nyakyusa country. When a chief dies he is buried beside his trees, and gradually a thicket—a sacred grove—forms round them.

The young men spend much time feasting and dancing. Formerly not only did they raid cattle for food from neighbouring chiefdoms, but they also took cattle, milk, and bananas from their fathers' villages. And they still do the latter, for they say: 'We are now the owners of the country.' The milk and bananas are often sent by the old chief, but 'if the chief is stingy, they teach him a lesson by going and *taking* bananas, saying: "We are important people."' Great emphasis is laid on this right of the young men to take food: one group, the mates of the first heir of a senior chief, boasted to us: 'We came out with grandeur, we ate many men's cattle.'

342 621 After a month or two the members of each new village move off to build on a site of their own, and the wives of those who are married join them. Wives do not come to the first temporary shelters. The senior of the new villages remains on the site of the temporary shelters where fire was made, the ritual trees planted, and the hearth-stones of the senior headman established with magic. Gradually each member builds himself a permanent hut.

621 561 The old men move aside to make room for their sons. If land is short they may move on to the site on which a boys' village formerly was, or there may be other land available. Whatever the position, adequate land must be provided for the young men's villages. And, we were told, 'We old men are glad to move, we are glad our sons are so many and we leave the land to them.' Or again: 'The old men move because new fire has come; the young men have made themselves into new people, hence they cannot build on their old sites but on new ones. Perhaps the old men will succeed them, for they may build in the boys' village where their sons were, or if there is space they go elsewhere. But the old men rejoice greatly, for their sons have "come out".' Nevertheless there are sometimes disputes between villages of different generations regarding a particular site (*vide* Document, p. 188).

643 562 585 A few months after the 'coming out' each of the two young chiefs marries two wives. A young chief may be married already; but the two whom he now takes rank as his great wives (*abeke*

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IV. A CHRISTIAN BOYS' VILLAGE BEING BUILT ROUND A SCHOOL
(the larger building in the centre of the picture)

[facing p. 35]

1: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938/1951 FN17 Ngondo FN17
Nyakyusa

1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

it is implied that coffee planted in the chiefdoms will be inherited by a man's heirs. As a leading Christian woman put it: 'We like to build on this side of the river because the other is mission land, and if a man moves he loses the coffee and everything else he has planted there. . . . A man has children and he wishes his children to inherit what he has planted.' The number of coffee-trees each man may plant on mission land is also limited to 100, so that the development of large plantations, such as some astute Nyakyusa are undertaking, is impossible there.

b. Building

When a group of boys starts a new village two or three friends usually combine to erect a little hut and live in it together. As younger boys join the village the older ones instruct and help their juniors to build. Thus, although as they grow older each boy builds a hut for himself, the habit of co-operation with village-mates in construction is already established. Until they are married, boys do all the work on their huts for themselves, fetching their own reeds or bamboos for the frame, and cutting and carrying thatching grass. They usually leave their huts unmudded. Adult men, on the other hand, are helped by their wives and female relatives as well as by sons and sons-in-law, and one or two of their own village neighbours. Men fell the bamboos, construct the framework of the house, and thatch, while women cut and carry grass, carry bamboos, mould the mud bricks which are packed between the bamboo uprights, and plaster the hut inside. The wife for whom the hut is being built is responsible for the women's work, but she usually gets some help from her co-wives and women neighbours, as well as from her mother and sisters, and the mother and sisters of her husband. Sons and sons-in-law are expected to bring with them other young men, their village-mates. Co-operation is thus both with relatives and village neighbours—the neighbours of the couple building the hut, and of their sons and sons-in-law.

The huts of married men are built with immense care, for not only are substantial houses essential to comfort, and indeed a condition of survival, in this climate of torrential rains and cold winter mists, but the Nyakyusa take great pride in the appearance of their homesteads (*vide infra*, p. 77). The early European

1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938) 1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

342 travellers in the area all comment on the excellently built huts and the cleanness of the villages.[1] Lord Lugard calls their huts 'the neatest and the most wonderfully built of any I have seen in Africa, excepting only the houses of the king and chiefs in Uganda.'[2] This high standard of building necessitates hard work and co-operation between a number of men and women.

c. Cultivation

241 The primary unit in cultivation is the elementary family consisting of a man, his wife and unmarried children or, in the case of a polygynous family, of the house group of a wife and her children, together with her husband, part of whose time is spent in hoeing her fields.[3] There is also, however, some co-operation with other relatives, and with village neighbours.

241 476 Unmarried sons hoe with their fathers and very often they bring one or more village-mates to work with them, making return, in due course, by working with these friends for their respective fathers. The boys who come are fed after hoeing, and should be fed generously, by the woman in whose fields they have worked. After his betrothal a young man comes in the same way with village-mates to hoe for his father-in-law, as well as continuing to hoe for his own father. Once his wife joins him they have their own fields, and the bulk of his time is spent in hoeing for her, but he still hoes one or two strips (*embaka*) for his own father and for his father-in-law. Such help is reciprocal, for his 'mothers' (i.e. his own mother and his father's other wives) and sisters, as well as the 'mothers' and sisters of his wife, will help his wife with her tasks of sowing, weeding, and reaping. From the point of view of village organization the essential fact is that young men working for fathers and fathers-in-law very frequently bring one or two village-mates with them. A typical hoeing group is made up of a man with his sons, and one or two village-mates of the sons.

[584]

Larger hoeing parties, to which not only youths, but also older men come, are fairly common, especially among the Kukwe.

[1] Elton, op. cit., p. 321; D. Kerr-Cross, 'Crater-lakes north of Lake Nyasa' in *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. V (1895), p. 116–7.

[2] F. D. Lugard, *The Rise of our East African Empire* (1893), Vol. I, p. 52.

[3] The respective rights of the husband and of each wife have been analysed by Godfrey Wilson, op. cit., pp. 16–29.

1: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938) 1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

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X. 'THE DIGNITY OF THE HOMESTEAD'— OLD STYLE
Note the tree planted and carefully protected, in the courtyard

[facing p. 71]

1: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938) 1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

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XI. A TRADITIONAL STYLE LONG HUT (IKIBAGA)

[FACING p. 78]

1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

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XII. 'THE DIGNITY OF THE HOMESTEAD'— NEW STYLE
Chief Porokoto's main house in Ilolo village

[facing p. 79]

1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

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XV. SETTLEMENT OF A DISPUTE

The anthropologist (Godfrey Wilson) is sitting with the court. On his right is the chief Mwaihojo, on his left Kasitile the rain-maker. Behind him (in a topee) is Mwaisumo the clerk, and Mwakionde, famous as a doctor and maker of lions. In the background is a half-built hut

[Facing p. 146]

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

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1. *Sacrifice and drums round the open grave*

[facing p. 20]

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

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2. Leaping on the newly filled grave

[facing p. 21]

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

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6. The groomsmen dance the stamping dance

[facing p. 101]

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

845 'To-day there is no ritual, we have come to express sympathy (*ukuti ndaga*).'[1]

845 342 The two grown sons of Mwakobela were building a little hut of saplings and had finished the main structure, but had not yet thatched it. 'She will sleep there to-night. They will put leaves on top.' Kikuku brought a message from Mwaipopo, to whom they had previously sent to tell him of the twin birth: 'If the hut is not finished she may sleep in the house, I agree to that. But Mwakobela said:

845 No, the hut is finished, she can sleep there. [To me]: To-night she will just sleep there, then the doctor will come [it is Mwaipopo's business to find the doctor] and will induct her (*akamumiagiya*), and then we shall lay the litter. The woman and her mother sleep there for a month with the twins—no others—the mother alone keeps her company (*akampanja*); then the doctor will come again to bring her out (*akamuya*). The ritual is in two parts, the induction and the bringing out.

They tie up the cord of the first twin to be born with a shred of plantain bark, and of the second with a shred of sweet banana bark, the plantain bark is a sign of seniority.

The woman may not cook while she is in the hut—it's taboo. But the other wives cook food for her and bring it to prevent her dying of hunger. Also her friends of the village will come with food and firewood to greet her. The pot in which food is cooked for the parents of twins must not be covered when it is on the fire, and if plantains are cooked only the middle bunches on the stem are used, not the ends; those at the ends are thrown away. When they are eating the wife may not begin until the husband has received his and put some in his mouth, then she too may eat.

845 784 It is wholly taboo for the mother of twins to call for anything she wants. She knocks with a stick to summon the one who brings her food. . . . If her husband wants anything he calls to his wives, it is not taboo, but he does not shout loudly, he must be careful not to make too great a noise, for if he shouts his children's hearts are startled and, it is said, they will die.

Traditionally, when the mother had to leave the hut to relieve herself, she walked backwards and hid her face with a piece of mat, to prevent herself from looking at the front of anyone. She avoided cows at pasture, and if she caught sight of anyone in the distance she waved a hand to warn them to let her pass.

May 13

845 Mwaiswelo III (Mwakobela's brother) came to fetch us at ten-

[1] This phrase can imply either condolence or congratulation.

2: Wilson 5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa
Kukwe

533 764 names of their father); Sananbi, Mwilwa, Maluhajegila (these are the praise-names of their mother). The next day they explained their song: 'It is to perform the ritual (*ukuyekala*). They call it *iyekala* (i.e. the ritual) and they say that if they don't perform it the child will be like an idiot, he will run about naked and mad.' In all the songs Sijele acted as leader and the principals as chorus.

Then, finally, a grain basket was brought and turned upside down. Sijele and the principals beat on it with a new rhythm, but still syncopated, singing: 'The two ways of the parent! The two ways of the parent!' And so it finished.

764 I was told that the next morning early the three principals would eat the beans which had now been cooked, but that they must stay for a night first in the hut.

Kalata commenting later said: 'We Kukwe circle and dance the stamping dance, but we beat neither the ground nor the basket. Beating the basket is a Sangu custom.' Kalata is a Kukwe but his mother was a Sangu.[1] 'We Kukwe sing farewell and "*Syala, syala*", and we dance round to the harp; but we don't sing "the two ways of the parent" at all!'

November 7

I arrived at 8 a.m. to find that the beans had been eaten. 'We came out in the morning cold very early, we washed our hands and ate the beans. Then Sijele, who had slept the night with us, swept out the rubbish (*imisala*) with the bunch of medicine twigs.' When I arrived Kalata was finishing the sweeping outside with an ordinary broom.

November 16 *Round of Mwalambo*

764 342 They began by building a little hut on the pathway that goes through the bananas to the stream, near the house. The path went right through the hut, which was built only by the officiants, not by the others. After they had finished building they planted hearth-bricks inside and lit a fire; then, taking some dry oil-seeds and powdered medicine, they called out to summon those for whom the ritual was being performed. When they came into the hut the officiants gave powdered medicine and oil-seeds to the child who received them in both hands and poured them into a potsherd on the fire, saying as he did so: 'This is the death of my grandmother.' They gave them to the two young men likewise, who said: 'This is the death of my mother' (that is to say: 'This is the ritual of my mother'). And then the officiant took all the rest of the oil-seeds and put them in the potsherd to roast.

764 When the seeds were roasted the officiant ground them up and began to prepare ointment. Meanwhile the principals poured water into a

[1] Strictly the ritual should have been Kukwe since a wife follows the ritual of her husband.

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde FN17

One by one the villagers emerge from the houses and
sit in the sun, greeting neighbours with a polite 512
"Have you slept well?" if there are any neighbours [576]
near. Then the husband milks the cattle, and the
boys come to drive them out to the pasture, where
they will remain until the early afternoon, when they
are again milked.

Generally the cattle sleep in the same house as their 231
owners, tied up to stakes fixed deep in the floor; but 592
where there are grown-up sons not yet married, a
separate house is built in which the parents sleep with
the little ones, while the young men guard the cattle
from raiding thieves.

The bed is frequently no more than a mat spread 513
on the mud floor, with a single blanket for covering,
and no pillow, unless it is a piece of roughly trimmed
wood. The more prosperous natives, earning good
pay in the employment of Europeans, have well-made
beds fully equipped, in many cases even with mosquito
nets hung from the roof. The poorer consider that
they have made a great step forward if they have
been able to save up enough money to buy a single
blanket, and not seldom even that belongs to the
father, the mother and children having to be content
with meagre coverings of calico or grass mats. But [354]
the house is warm, often too warm, for the fire is
always burning, the door is closed, there are no
windows, and there is no ventilation in the roof;
and all the inmates sleep with their feet to the fire,
which is in the middle of the floor.

Here and there one will come upon rows of tiny 342
houses, each built and occupied by two or three small 561

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde FN17

342 561 boys, who have grown too big to occupy any longer the single-roomed hut in which their parents dwell. They are slender erections of reed and grass, and look as if a strong wind might carry them away; but the children live a happy, and not always innocent, life in these huts until they are able to build bigger ones for themselves.

291 Dress is more conspicuous by its absence than by its presence. During the day the women wear little but a long strip of bark cloth hanging down almost to the ground before and behind. The children usually have nothing at all, unless they have the good fortune to get a strip of cloth from a grandparent. They go about quite naked for the first few years of life, and a mission school usually reveals rows of children who consist of long legs and arms and smiling faces, wholly unconscious of need if they have a tiny rag strung in front, often not more than a few square inches in size. But the men who are earning money may be well dressed. The richer wear trousers and jacket, a shirt, a collar and tie, boots, if they are able to afford them, and a helmet. Their wives and children wear long robes of highly coloured cloths, and are no doubt observed with envy by their less fortunate sister-women, with little but a piece of bark-cloth to hide their nakedness. The average man, however, goes to church or market with a single garment, unsewn, flung over his shoulders, and covering, more or less completely, his whole body; but he goes to work in a scanty waist cloth, which leaves him uncovered below the knees and above the waist. Men

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde FN17

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A Kondé Village, Lake Shore Type.

[facing p. 32]

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde FN17

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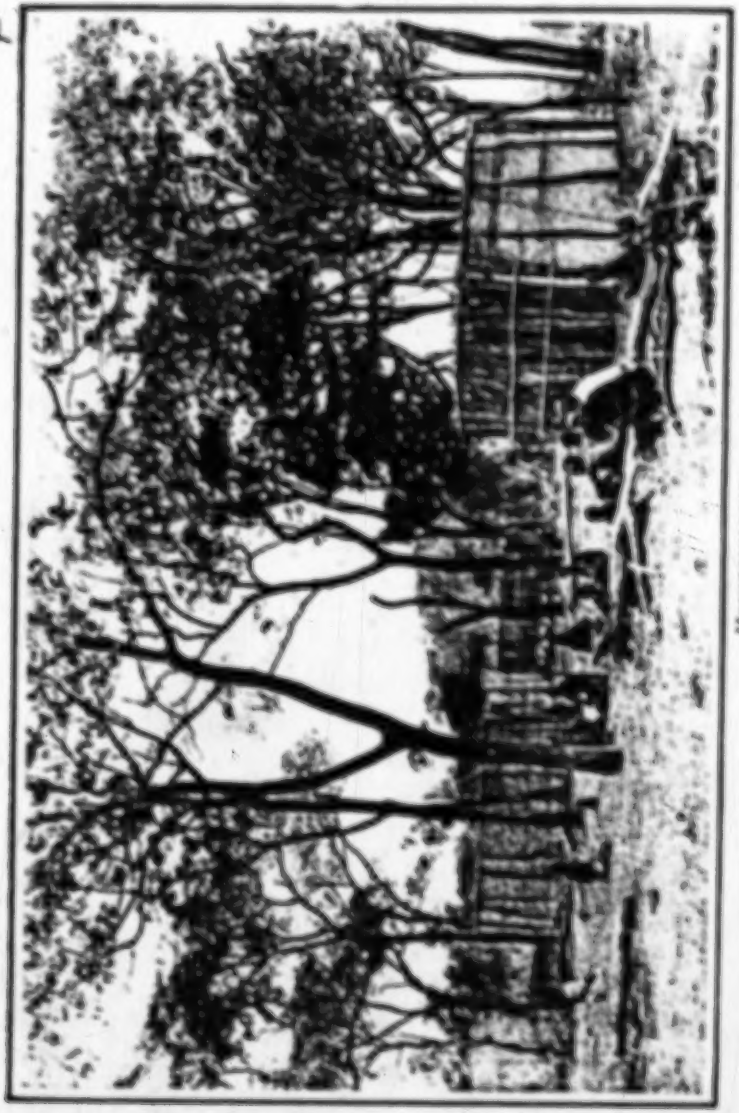

Among the Konde this is a heavenly process. Men, not roused from other tasks are unable to fight, and the workers polish for weeks to other duties. The men cool the earth, which the women plaster. The finished pots is brought in by the women, but finishing is men's work.

[facing p. 152]

3:Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde FN17

animals, snakes, in astonishing variety, done in black or red on white ground by two native artists from Rungwe. Whether the ideas were supplied to them by the white man who owned the house, I cannot tell, but the execution is entirely native, and, although the total effect is weird rather than pleasing, it indicates possibilities which might be worth developing.

If housebuilding be included in arts and crafts, then the Konde people take a high place. There are at present some remarkably good houses at Karonga, of four, five, or six apartments, built on the European model, with properly made doors and windows; and there is, not far from Tukuyu, a house at present being built, with two storeys, T-shaped, the only materials used being the ordinary wood and clay. But the common Konde hut is a very high-class thing compared with the rude erections of tribes which have surpassed the Konde in other respects. Whether it be the older round type, or the newer square, there is a neatness and cleanliness in the Konde homestead that is sadly lacking in tribes that are wealthier, and more ambitious, but whose ambitons are only slowly reaching out towards improved dwellings.

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde FN17

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A KONDE HUT.

Leisureliness is the key note of Konde life, and there is always time to sit down for the welcome chat about cattle, crops, children, or the white man, whose strange ways are of unfailing interest.

LION HUNTING.

The presence of a lion in a district causes a great scare, and the chief may call up all able-bodied men, armed with spears, clubs and bows, to the hunt. The lion—or leopard—is sometimes seized alive and clubbed or speared to death. The presence of a white man with a rifle gives increased courage to the hunters.

[Facing p. 176]

8: Wilson E-5 (1934-1936)1936 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

621 561 others as well. Any boys' village is found to consist primarily of the sons of the members of some older village who originally gave the land for its building, but as we shall see later sons of other villages live there too.

621 342 At the beginning, when a group of boys starts a new age-village, or when boys join one already formed, they do not all have a hut to themselves, two or three friends share a hut. But later, as they grow older, each builds for himself. The younger ones build their huts of reeds, but the older ones try to get a few bamboos from their fathers or senior relatives and build more solid houses. Married men build entirely of bamboo, but often in a boys' village you will find a compromise between bamboo and reed, both being used in the same house; and the houses of bachelors, even though they be all of bamboo, are smaller than those of married men. The technique of good building is not very difficult, and the older boys instruct and help their juniors, as they join the village, to improve the skill playfully acquired as herd-boys so as to build more substantial huts.

245 262 The chief food of the Nyakyusa is the banana; men plant bananas immediately round their huts, though their fields are mostly at a distance. And bachelors, while they continue to eat their main meals at their parents' village, plant bananas round their own huts as well. Bananas begin to bear very quickly, sometimes within a year of planting, and so, soon after the establishment of a boys' village, its members have bananas of their own, which they cook for themselves and eat with their friends at odd times during the day. But they have as yet no fields.

864 [881] 577 There is no formal initiation of boys at puberty; but, on the other hand, the custom of leaving home and joining a boys' village is directly connected by the Nyakyusa with their ideas of decency in sexual life. They think it is perfectly all right to discuss sex openly among friends of about the same age but altogether wrong to discuss it either in the presence of, or with, their parents or those of their parents' generation. If a boy learns about love-making, in any way, from his parents the Nyakyusa think that he will not respect them properly and that he himself will be a fool. A boy must learn these things from his immediate seniors and friends. One man said to me: "If a boy after about ten years old stays at home to sleep, he is laughed at by his friends and his own parents send him away. They say: 'If he sleeps at home he will hear what his parents talk about at night, the night is always full of lewd talk; and he may even see them undressing. He will grow up a fool, with little wisdom.' You see at the boys' village" he went on to say, "the older

631 Age-villages combined to form a chiefdom under the hereditary chief,
628 *malafyale*, but active co-operation between villages thus associated was often slight; indeed in the larger chiefdoms there commonly existed intermittent animosity which might break out in raiding or even civil war. The
[721] integrity of these larger chiefdoms was weak – for example, when the
548 Nyakyusa were attacked by Sangu and Ngoni war-parties, and later by the Germans, villages of the same chiefdom conspicuously failed to join in common defence. Similarly the land affairs of one village were no concern of any other, and each jealously guarded its own rights.

631 None of the chiefdoms was large; smallness of scale is typical of
162 Nyakyusa political organisation and social attitudes. In 1955 the smallest indigenous chiefdom contained only 36 men. In 1948 55,700 people were divided amongst about 18 indigenous chiefs, but undoubtedly had not the Colonial Government frozen the system there would have been rather more – at least five more. Today there are 12 recognised "administrative chiefs", amongst whom five have each less than 3,000 people under them, and the largest chiefdom contains fewer than 10,000 people – the average is just over 4,000 people.

631 Nevertheless the chiefdom, the collection of villages, was important,
361 because in the creation of the chiefdom villages were created, and in its development the villages developed, matured and died away. A village survived only so long as its members lived and by the nature of the age-organisation there was but little possibility of the recruitment of new members, for villagers' sons left to form their own new villages. Their sons eventually came to comprise the core of the new chiefdoms.

642 In connection with the constitution of a Nyakyusa village and with
643 land tenure, the significant feature of the chiefdom was its establishment,
[796] together with the induction of a new chief, at the great "coming-out"
[898] ceremony, *ubusoka*. In brief, each chief was succeeded by two of his sons – the eldest son of each of the senior houses of the chief, i.e., of his first two wives. At the "coming-out" ceremony, when the sons were still young men and their father was not a particularly old man, the old chiefdom was divided into two, each part coming under one of the new young chiefs. Before this critical occasion – at which much important ritual was performed – the younger men of the old chiefdom had already moved away from their fathers villages and had established their own incipient villages nearby, each one containing a group of coevals. A Nyakyusa boy from the age of about seven years could not continue to live with his father and mother, but, in company with his equals, built his own hut on a site adjacent to the main
631 village as indicated by the fathers' headman. Until the "coming-out" cere-
[342] mony these youths' villages came under the control of the old village headmen; but with the induction of the new chiefs they achieved independent status, each with its own headman appointed from among its members by the old headmen. Each new village was allocated a new building site and a new arable area, and quite commonly the old villages, the older men, moved away a little in order to give the younger men adequate access to the land, for it was considered that the young men's needs for land were paramount.

631 After this wholesale reorganisation of the old chiefdom, when new
[178] villages were established and new boundaries demarcated,[1] the old chief
[622] himself, the old headmen and the older men (the "fathers") gradually retired from active public life. The old chief was supposed to commit suicide after a time (or was quietly killed off) in order to leave the field clear for his
643 sons; the old headmen became the religious and ritual leaders of the new
[888] chiefdoms, with the flavour of elder statesmanship, and the old men's

1. "At the "coming-out" it is said that "everything is made new", boundaries are redrawn and the new chiefdoms and villages of the young men are conventionally incorporated". Wilson, G., 1938, p. 31.

10:Gulliver E-5 (1954-1955) 1958 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

land automatically reverted to the common pool. An established villager might decide to use part of it perhaps, but not before prudently gaining the approval of the headman, lest the migrant return later and accuse him of unlawful and unfriendly seizure. If the headman agreed, as he would after a time in most cases, the newly acquired plot became part of that villager's holding with as secure a title as the rest. Such vacated land could also be allocated by the headman to a newcomer or, before the sons' village was established, to the son of a villager.

If a man had more land than he could cultivate – because, for example, his sons had left him to cultivate in their own villages, or his wife had died – he was under no essential obligation to give up any part. The headman might, if the need arose, try to persuade him to release a portion in order to make it available to someone in need; but the land-holder could refuse and the headman had to accept his refusal. As a chief depended on the support of his headmen, so did a headman's position ultimately depend upon at least the passive support of his villagers, from whose ranks he was chosen.

At the next "coming-out" ceremony the men of a village of the old chiefdom might be required to move aside in order to allow the young men, their sons, to take up the better building sites and farming land. This they traditionally did voluntarily and they built new homesteads on one side and cleared new arable plots. Once re-established in this manner, these older men would not be disturbed again and they remained secure in their new holdings. How often in fact such a displacement took place I cannot say, but it certainly seems to have occurred sometimes, for one can still trace old village sites which appear to bear out the common Nyakyusa story.

In all this it must be remembered that the spirit of village unity and coevality was held in far higher esteem than land in such a fertile country where land was plentiful and subsistence farming required but small-sized holdings. Security of tenure and defined rights to particular plots are notions belonging to a different situation and age; when land begins to be scarce and to have an economic value, and when there is danger of men not being able to obtain as much as they need roughly where they need it.

Newcomers were invariably welcomed to a village: they were supplied with a house site and an arable holding and were assisted with food until the first harvest. They were an addition to the numerical size and physical strength of the village, and they increased a headman's prestige. Their rights were no less assured than those of founder-members of the village, although their social position was less secure, at least at first, for they had not shared in the history of the community and had not grown up with the ties of village association and comradeship amounting almost to kinship.

Traditional rights in trees may be mentioned briefly. Trees were inherited without difficulty along with the land on which they stood, and a brother or son would commonly inherit the deceased's valuable trees without bothering to take the arable land around. If a man left his village and thus forfeited his land there, the position was different. Banana trees went with the land and a new occupant simply took them over; bananas are of no great value as they grow so readily and ubiquitously. Bamboos are more valuable (being used extensively in house-building) and any left behind in this way could be claimed in the first instance not by the village but by the chief. If the chief wanted them they became his property, or he could grant them to any man he favoured. Usually a chief was content to leave them: then the local kinsmen of the departed man had first claim, and if they had no use for them, or if no kinsmen were resident in the village, they became village property to be allocated by the headman. *Usyunguti* trees[1] were regarded in

1. These are valued oil-bearing trees planted by the Nyakyusa of the Lake Plains, the botanical name of which I do not know.

[P.236 A]

WANYAKYUSA AGRICULTURE

By D. H. Thwaites, Agricultural Assistant, Tanganyika Territory

131 The Wanyakyusa occupy the District of Rungwe in the Southern Highlands Province. The district lies between 9° and 9½° S. latitude
133 at the northern tip of Lake Nyasa. The altitude ranges from 1,500 feet to 9,500 feet. The
631 district is divided into twelve chiefdoms. The Administrative Headquarters are at Tukuyu, which was known before the British occupation as Neu Langenberg.

Inhabitants

101 The local people are not indigeneous to this area. They came, tradition has it, from
[173] Mahenge via Ukinga after many tribal fights. They are akin to the Wahenga in Nyasaland bordering on the Tanganyika boundary. It is
191 estimated that only 10 per cent of the Wanya-
161 kyusa speak Kiswahili. According to the 1935
162 census the total poulation was 153,204. The total number of tax-payers in 1942 was 35,304, or 23.04 per cent of the total population.

181 The people themselves are extremely industrious and intelligent. As there are 90 people to the square mile, living conditions are
105 crowded and emigration is continually taking place. The people are partial to litigation over cattle and women. The number of cases heard annually in the Native Courts is about 6,000. There is no one historical and traditional head of the tribe. The twelve Chiefs are, in reality, hereditary Headmen who have been selected by Government to be Chiefs. They are in effect only *primi inter pares* in native eyes, the outlook of the people being unusually democratic for a native tribe.

105 The people live in houses made of wattle and daub or bamboo frame, with thatched
● 342 roof, and villages are sited mostly along ridges.
361 Rectangular houses are now built instead of the round huts of former days. They often stand in rows with a main street down the middle with bananas in the background. The more progressive natives build with sun-dried or burnt brick. Stock are stalled in the same house owing to the prevalence of thieving, but sleep in separate rooms.

Climate

132 The rainfall of the district varies in the different areas. In Tukuyu itself the annual average for 25 years (1918-1942) is 100.22 inches. On the Lake shore the average is probably higher, but no continuous statistics are available. The heaviest rainfall months are from December to May, but, in most years,

12: Bisgaard E-5 (1955) 1962 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa
Chagga FN4
Haya FN8

House-types of the Banyakyusa

By Agnete Bisgaard

During a stay in the Southern Highlands in Tanganyika in 1955, I was given the opportunity to inspect—and draw plans of—some of the houses belonging to the local Bantu tribe of the Nyakyusa. In literature they are known also under the name of Konde.

The district in which they live is fairly high above sea level and near the borders of Rhodesia and Nyasaland; the rainfall is fully adequate. Banana and coffee are doing well—the banana trees often forming groves in between which you catch a glimpse of the village houses.

The district invites comparison with other localities in Tanganyika where the country is high, and where precipitation is plentiful. Such localities would be the districts around Kilimanjaro and near Bukoba to the west of Lake Victoria. In the former live the Chagga tribe, in the latter the tribe of the Haya. Even here banana and coffee are plenty—and the I.Q. of both tribes is said to be high, as is the case of the Banyakyusa (plural of Nyakyusa).

Maybe you might therefore expect to find a corresponding standard of dwelling-houses, perhaps even the same type of hut. But in this matter you will be highly surprised; so great are the differences between the three areas. Apart from the original design of the house being round and the roof thatched, no similarity exists between the various houses or their interior lay-outs.

The round, thatched Chagga hut has its roof all way down to the ground. It is not very large and the interior lay-out is quite primitive. A cow or goat lives all its life indoors and is fed there. A short and uncomfortable bed is found near by. Down the centre of the floor is a stone-paved aisle. Everything looks quite simple—especially when you remember that in other aspects the Chagga are quite advanced in their use of modern facilities; for instance they use electricity for the grinding of their maize.

The Haya hut—the old, round type—is a really magnificent thing. I think its centre is seven or eight metres high. In front it has a kind of overhang, maybe you might call it a front room, where people will sit, and where guests will be received. If you are a wellcome guest, a straw mat will be rolled out to cover the grass flooring of the hut. The walls of the front room are solid plates made from a kind of reed. The hearth is placed near the centre of the inner room.

[P. 47]

12: Bisgaard E-5 (1955) 1962 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa
Haya FN8

H 342 As indicated above, the floor is covered with grass. Various domestic utensils may be seen, stuck into thin screens of plant material.

H 342 178 But this old, beautiful type of hut is very much on the decline. It is costly to make and to keep in repair, and the thick straw roof is, admittedly, highly inflammable. A flying trip round Lake Victoria clearly shows how the straw roofs in the banana groves are being replaced by corrugated iron. This change may even have another reason, viz. the fact that fodder for cattle is in short supply and that the grass for roofs is hard to come by. No doubt, it is a question of time when the fine old Haya hut will have disappeared.

N 114 In the Southern Highlands, where I was given the opportunity to stay for three months at various Danish mission stations, I visited the village round the Rungwe mission, the neighbouring villages of Ilolo and Kikota, and some villages near the Rutenganio mission station. I made a trip to Lake Nyasa and another to the Poloto mountains. I must admit to a limited knowledge of drawing technique and of house construction, but I have measured a number of houses and sketched their plan and also the furnishings I found in them. The positioning of the various objects has been established.

N 361 [342] 356] The high standard of dwellings of the Banyakyusa is truly to be wondered at. The houses, clustered in villages, often along a winding street, lie intermingled with banana and coffee bushes. The houses are large and their interior is clean. Often two or three houses belong to one family, and, if so, will be grouped round a courtyard.

N 342 [824] Even if you could find houses built from sun-dried bricks and fired tiles, most were from bamboo with a grass roofing.

All houses stand on a clay base which, though not very high, no doubt means some protection against penetration of ground moisture during the heavy rains of April–June.

N [824] Besides bamboo, sometimes the bole of tree fern, *makele*, is used in outer walls. Such tree fern stems have not the carrying capacity of bamboo, but they are far more resistant to rot. Among the other common features of the existing types of houses, should be mentioned the mud clods, the size of rolls that from the inside are pressed between the vertical bamboo poles; also, the inner wall is roughcast with a mixture of mud and cow manure; the floor is from tamped clay. In some places you find very fine floors in which a pattern has been rolled into the wet clay; to this end a short length of the stem of the banana cluster has been employed, viz. the length between the seats of the male and the female flowers. Also employed are another plant stem, or an empty corn cob.

N [237] [531]

N 354 595 In all houses where women live, there are one or more hearths. The presence of two hearths in one house usually means that the husband has two wives, each wife having her own hearth, either in the common house or in a house of her own.

N 347 The houses always have a kind of ceiling made from bamboo sticks and carried

12: Bisgaard E-5 (1955) 1962 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

by horizontal bamboo joists, at right angles to the principal beams of the ceiling. This ceiling never covers the entire room, but only the greater part, and always the part directly above the hearth. Up here firewood is placed to dry. A fine black basket is hung from the ceiling above the fire. Access to the loft is by means of a ladder.

When you read reports by the 'first' Europeans on these peoples and their houses, they always refer to a round house with reclining walls and a conical roof. Merensky (1894) mentions and illustrates such a house (pages 141 et seq.). Fülleborn (1906) mentions and illustrates several houses (Text Volume pages 376 et seq., and Atlas, plates 64–67). The inner surface of the walls of the house was decorated with patterns impressed into the mud layer which covers the bamboo poles. The three stones that form the hearth are shown, and also the bed behind a low permanent partition wall. These were exceptionally fine houses with beautiful, decorated and painted doors. The entrance had relief ornaments, often of coloured clay. Fülleborn notes that the mud houses are the dwellings of married people.

There is no doubt that the round house is the original type of dwelling. In 1955, I saw no round houses like the ones described by the above scholars, but I know that formerly they were often seen, at least as late as 1932. Professor Monica Wilson of Cape Town has told me that she saw them everywhere in 1932, but that during a visit to the district in 1955 she found only one single house of this type, in the village of Masoko.

At the time of my visit, round houses could be seen, but not the type having walls inclining inwards near the ground, and they were not by far as imposing as the houses mentioned above; and there were not many of them. I had the opportunity to make drawings of three houses, all occupied by old people.

The round house is called an *isinga*. In one of these *isinga* there lived an old man whose wife, Malia, lived across the courtyard in a rectangular hut of the old Nyakyusa type (see infra). The husband's house was 6.5 metres across, and was divided in halves by a fence made from sticks. One half was where the man lived; it had one bed for him, and one for his grandchildren, who would come to visit him, now and then. Near the wall were two iron chests; also, a board had been hung at the wall as a roost for the chicken. A hen's nest, a small wicker basket, was placed about 3 ft. above the floor in the furcation of a four or five-pronged stick. These hen's nests are seen in all houses. The ceiling was supported by seven upright posts, seemingly placed entirely at random. The under side of the roof was strengthened by eight circular-running fascines of bamboo. In the centre, a heavy log (not bamboo) reached up to the pointed top of the roof.

The other half of the house was reserved for the cattle, three cows and two calves; there were five posts to which the cattle were tied at night.

The house had an outer door at each end, but there was no passage from the man's half to that of the cattle.

12: Bisgaard E-5 (1955) 1962 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

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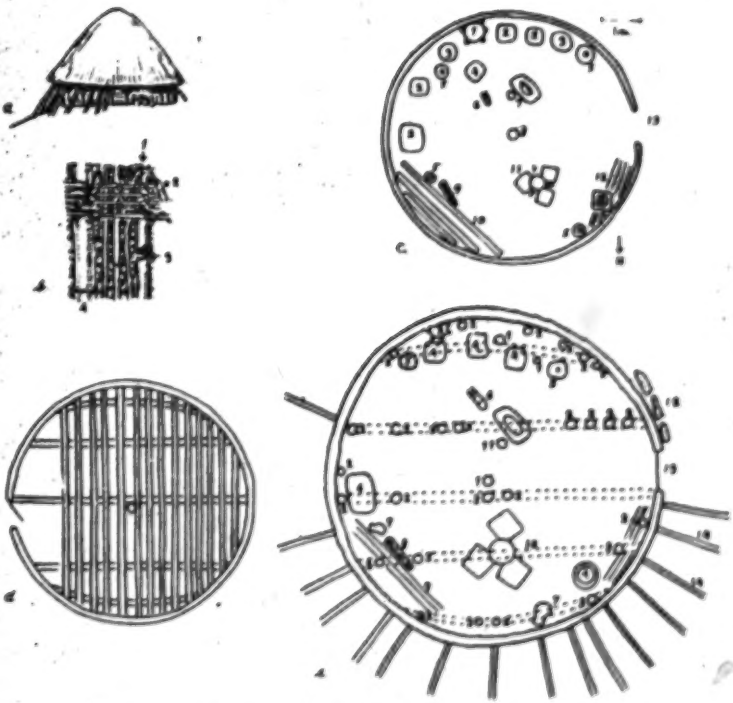

Isinga. Maloba's house at Ilolo near the Rungwe mission station.

a. Elevation showing buttressing posts; to the right of the door is material for thatching.—b. Detail of wall. 1, cow's horn; 2, bark fibre for winding round poles; 3, notch made in bamboo pole that was crooked; 4, bamboo.—c. Plan of house showing furnishings and utensils on the floor, but not the sticks that were lying everywhere (see plan e). 1, hen's nest; 2, basket; 3, jar; 4, newly made basket; 5, calabash; 6, broom; 7, mill-stone and grinder; 8, centre post (here were a couple of bananas for food); 9, sleeping mat; 10, small under-ceiling from sticks tied together, for small things; 11, hearth; 12, heap of *ishete*, a kind of grass which looks much like thin bamboo.—d. Cross-section at ceiling level showing centre post, beams, and joists on which the sticks are placed; the centre post reaches right up to the top of the roof.—e. Plan of house showing beams of the ceiling (dotted lines, cf. d). 1, centre post; 2, other beam-carrying posts; 3, hen's nest; 4, baskets; 5, calabash; 6, broom; 7, calabash; 8, sleeping mat; 9, small under-ceiling, repository for small things; 10, hearth from three stones; 11, mill-stone and small grinder; 12, thatching material; 13, door; 14, outside buttresses.

342 The round house was standing on somewhat higher ground than the surrounding bananas; half the house was buttressed by wooden posts, possibly because the ground was a bit lower there. The walls were from bamboo poles,

12: Bisgaard E-5 (1955) 1962 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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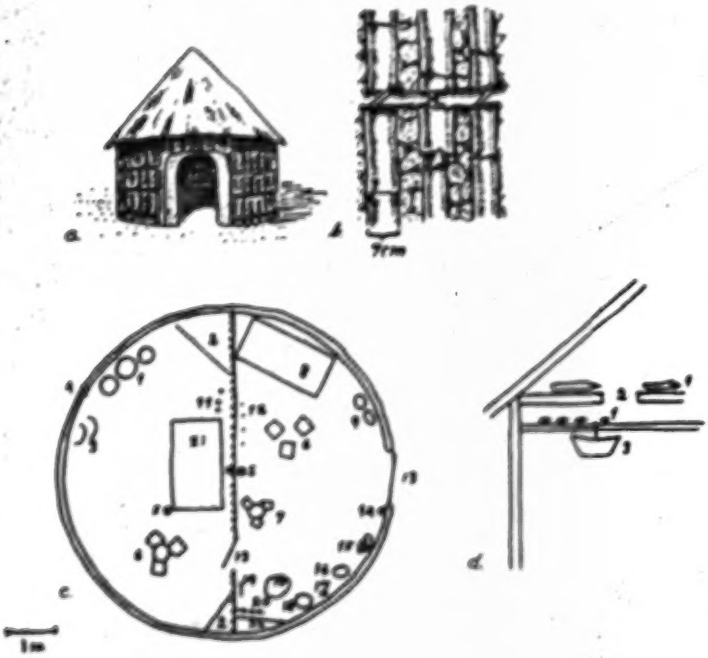


Isinga. Tufwene's house at Rungwe. Sept. 1955.

a. Elevation, showing doorway with walls drawn too thick; the door itself has been left out.—b. Outside detail of wall showing split cross-bamboos; red clay cobs between poles.—c. Plan. 1, jars; 2, shelves; 3, *ubudile* etc. (an *ubudile* is a flat basket used as a plate); 4, small window; 5, centre post; 6, hearth; 7, water jar; 8, spare bed; 9, banana fibres; 10, bird's nest; 11, sticks; 12, sticks for kitchen utensils; 13, door; 14, post for locking device; 15, stone grinding trough; 16, basket with bananas; 17, pestle; 18, *ikisa*; 19, *ukuwaya*, mat [illegible] collecting flour from grinding stone; 20, bamboo ladder; 21, bed of the woman; 22, roof [illegible] cross-section of bamboo ceiling, with firewood for drying, and a flour basket below.

connected near the ground with tree fern stems which easily found into the hollow of the bamboo. Between these tree fern stems, the liquid manure from the cow-house could escape—much to the benefit of the nearby bananas.

The other *isinga* belonged to the old widow, Tufwene. She lived alone in her house. The walls were bamboo, up to 7 cm in diameter. From the inside, the space between the poles had been filled with 3–5 cm large cobs of red clay. Round the outside were four horizontal bands of split bamboo.

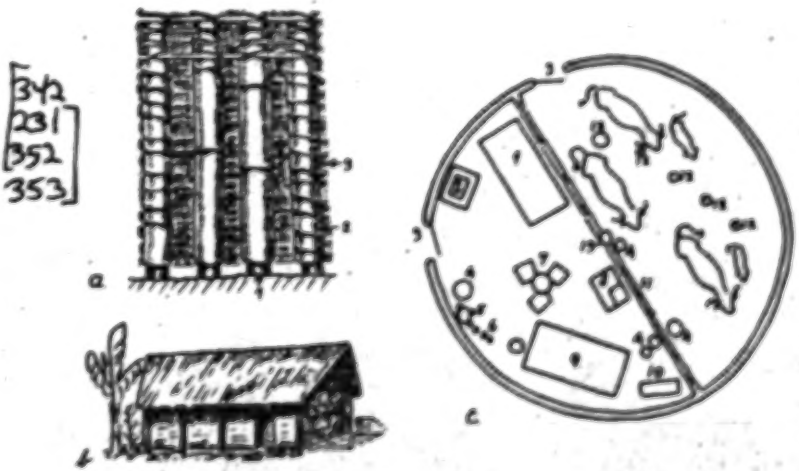
This house, too, was 6.5 metres in diameter, and it was divided into two equal [353]

12: Biegaard E-5 (1955) 1962 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

342 353 parts. The partition wall was bamboo and mud. A doorway gave on to the inner part, where Tufwene had her bed.

354 There were two hearths, one in each room. The front one was not used. In the outer room was a bed for guests—a common feature of all houses. Tufwene was thought to be well off, and she had plenty of carrying rings, used by the 482 women when they carry loads, often very heavy, on their heads. The inner room was used for stores, including a number of earthen jars. She had three very fine, 352 low stools. I saw them outside in the sun, but their usual place was no doubt in the outer room, which had the character of a workroom. Here were the large 412 wooden mortar and its long pestle; also the grinding stone and in a corner the small mat, the *ulyanya*, which is used to take up the newly ground flour. There 417 was also the ladder, used for fetching down firewood from the loft; you could see 415 the hen's nest, and the large water jar with its pointed bottom placed on three stones.

415 The third *isinga* belonged to an eighty-year-old woman whose husband had [769] died. She told me how every day she would fill a fine, decorated bamboo mug [53] with milk for him! These mugs, seen in all the houses, mostly have geometrical



Houses belonging to Malia Ufinyikanya and her husband.

a. Detail of *isinga*, outer wall. 1, tree fork stem joined to bamboo pole—note aperture for liquid manure; 2, bamboo pole with plant fibre windings; 3, split bamboo.—b, Malia's *ikilanga*. —c. Plan of *isinga*. 1, bed of the man; 2, iron chests for garments; 3, door; 4, posts supporting ceiling; 5, hen's nest; 6, hoes and pestle for the maize mortar; 7, hearth; 8, chests; 9, bed of the grandchildren; 10, mortar from hollowed out trunk; 11, low partition; 12, posts for tying cattle; 13, centre post to top of roof.

12: Biegaard E-5 (1955) 1962 FN17 Ngonde FN17 Nyakyusa

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patterns burned into the bamboo; they are hung upside down so the dust will not settle in them. The bottom is the natural partition of the bamboo cane.

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The house was standing on high, slightly slanting ground, and like the first mentioned house it was buttressed by a great number of thick branches. Incidentally, it seemed to be very old and rickety. Inside, there were a great many posts supporting the horizontal bamboo ceiling and the stores of firewood. All posts were bifurcated and held the beams solidly in place. The diameter of the house was the usual 6.5 metres, but in this case there was no inner partition. As this woman was very poor, she had no bed, but slept on a mat on the floor. Only very rarely is there no bed in the houses; I remember having seen this only three times.

[352 556]

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The hearth was the usual type: three decorated square stones, rising to a height of 30 cm above the floor, but being sunk 70 cm into the ground. Here they were positioned on one side, to ensure that the centre post would not catch fire, and to make for easy escape of the smoke through the doorway. None of the houses have other means of smoke outlet.

352 [253]

Alongside the wall were calabashes, jars, and baskets; material for the baskets; and a little away from the wall, the large mill-stone and its appurtenant smaller grinding stone. A hen's nest was not missing either. Along one side was fixed a small under-ceiling for the storage of small things. Two or three bananas, meant to be her next meal, were lying on the floor near one of the posts. From the loft she reached down a calfskin in which she had been carrying her child. Its inside was of a reddish colour.

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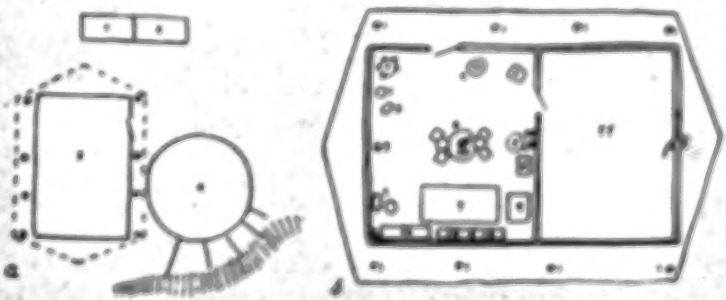

a. Site plan of Maka Ulinyehaya's houses. 1, hen-coop; 2, drying-racks for crops; 3, Maka's ihilago with roof supports along sides; 4, ihango belonging to Maka's husband, with hearth-stones at low ground.—b. Plan of Maka's ihilago (barred window in back room). 1, hen's nest; 2, ihiwa (stool); 3, posts (those going up to ridge of roof are filled in); 4, large basket; 5, basket; 6, clay base round twin posts; 7, Maka's bed; 8, chest; 9, wooden chest; 10, table; 11, back room, having bamboo ceiling carried by bamboo cross beam (between posts marked 3); the room is used for storing clothes, etc.; 12, shelves.

12: Biegaard E-5 (1955) 1962 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

342 Another old woman lived in a neighbouring *ikinga* close by—if possible even more sparsely furnished than the last mentioned.

Common features of the round houses were: their size, the wooden centre-post, the ceiling covering the greater part of the room, the supporting posts for the beams that carry the bamboo joists and the ceiling proper; the building materials bamboo and mud; and the positioning of the hearth slightly off centre.

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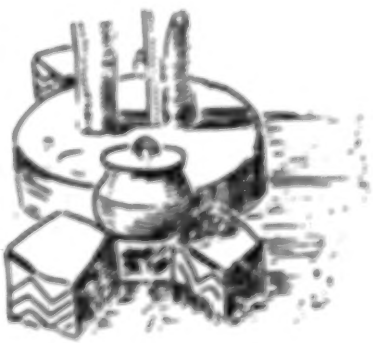

The two hearths of Malia's house. A clay bank surrounds the main posts, thus serves to foreground them. Two hearthstones on either side form the hearths, the clay bank acting as the third 'stone'.

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342 The differences between this *ikinga* and the original round-type house are: the angle of the wall, here vertical (as opposed to the inclination of the wall of the original house); the entrance (here without ornaments); the door itself also without ornaments; and further the fact that the clay cobs placed between the bamboo poles were here not the shape but only the size of rolls. The pictures presented by Fülleborn clearly show the carefully formed clay balls in the wall.

531 As distinct from the old-type house, this new type of house has no decorations on the inside of the wall, but in some instances decorations are found on the floor.

342 Another type of house, again, was rectangular, often very long, with a ridge-beam roof. In most cases, these houses were buttressed along both sides, and were thus provided with what you might call two verandahs. Sometimes also the gables of the houses had buttresses. The roof projected over the gables, most near the ridge. The roof sagged in the middle, a fact that was already observed by the scholars mentioned. This may be because the ridge-beam is not dry but freshly cut, when it is mounted in its place. During the subsequent drying process under load it will then be brought to sag—as we know from other types of houses.

This house is called an *ikilago* and is known to be typical of the Nanyakyusa since olden times. Literally, *ikilago* means stable or cowhouse, thus presumably indicating its original purpose. There is a full description of this house in Fülle-

12: Biegaard E-S (1955) 1962 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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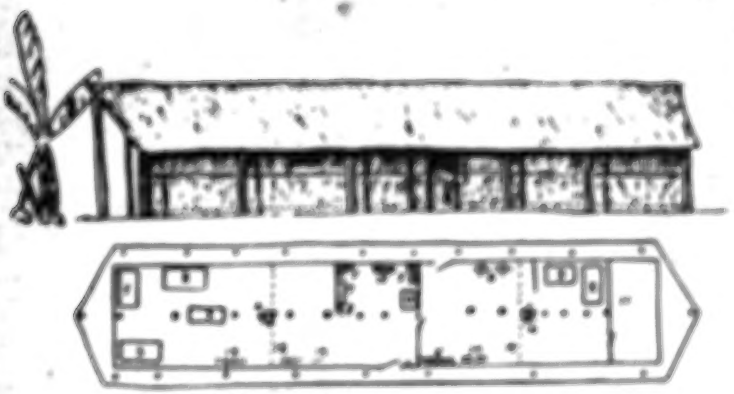


An Ankuga in the village of Kiwanda, the district of Rungwale, belonging to a man with two wives. The rooms have bamboo ceilings from dotted lines to ridge-pole. Poles reaching to ridge of roof are filled in. 1, husband's bed; 2, wife's bed; 3, child's bed; 4, hearth; 5, bins' seats; 6, water jar; 7, mat; 8, ladder; 9, table; 10, stools; 11, store-room; 12, dotted lines show limitation of ceiling; 13, small objects; 14, working material; 15, sleeping mat.

hers. On page 353, he reports how the boys, when 7 or 10 years old, will leave their parents' house to live in long, rectangular cowhouse-like houses big or small, in a special youngsters' quarter at the far end of the village. On page 358 he writes: In many cases you do not know for certain whether you are dealing with a youngsters' house or a cowhouse—for the cattle may well be kept in these houses—or the herdsmen may sleep in the cowhouses. However, this usually holds true of the low-lying Konde country, while on the other hand, in the high country, the cattle is usually kept in the dwelling houses. On pages 371 and 372, he relates how the cattle is tied up pairs at night, and he shows a picture of a cowhouse.

He also refers (on page 378) to the use of the rectangular house for married men besides the boys. The difference is seen in the fact that these houses are not roughcast with mud, as this work is the province of women. Finally, he reports that, during the last few years of his stay in the Konde country, he saw Konde houses being built under increasing influence of the coastal culture, in imitation of the Swahili houses. They were roughcast with mud inside and out, and had a verandah supported by posts.

In 1955, many dialogue could be seen. Some were for the cattle, but most were dwelling houses for married people. (Boys aged 7–10 and upwards until the marriageable age lived in cowherds' boys' houses, the material of which was not bamboo, but a thinner grass, resembling bamboo very much. These houses stood

12: Biegaard E-5 (1955) 1962 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

342 ordinary or in a row some distance from the other houses of the village. They were never roughcast with mud).

Nearly all the *dukaga* had a post-supported verandah. I measured up and drew sketches of two houses of this type, one belonging to the above-mentioned woman called Malia, whose husband lived next door in an *isinga*. She was a Christian—actually a church-elder. On the outside of her bamboo-framed, mud-roughcast wall, she had drawn a church in yellow, red, and black colours, and below she had written the word *kanisa* (church). Apart from a house near Lake Nyasa, of which I took a photograph and which had very modernistic and drastic drawings on its outside wall (crocodiles, a man and his bicycle, a man with his firearms), it is the only instance in which I saw any kind of coloured decoration on a house. Besides impressed patterns in clay on hearth and floor, I saw no decorations on the inside or outside of houses, except fine patterns in the outside wickerwork of the wall.

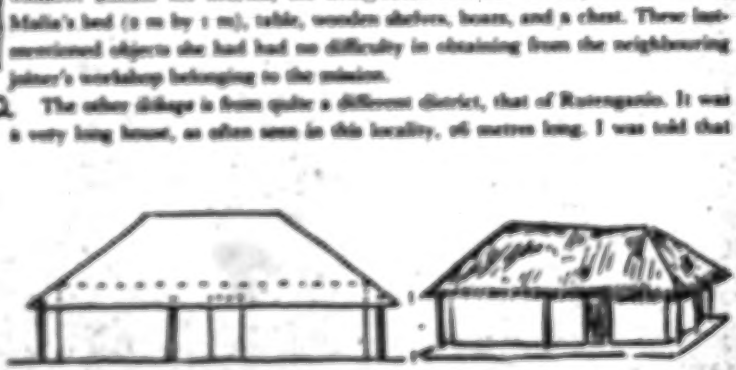
342 532

342 In this house, approximately 8 metres long, there were two vertical supporting posts, reaching to the very ridge of the roof, where presumably they were joined to the ridge beam. However, the beam could not be seen.

354 The hearth was peculiar in that it consisted of two pairs of hearthstones near a clay base that surrounded a supporting post and a shorter post. Thus two hearths were available, at the same time serving as fire-proofing to the posts. Though Malia was a single woman, the house had two hearths. You might think that she had seen a stove and had found that two cooking places would be useful. I saw this arrangement in one more place, in the house of a widow, who—by the way—was also a Christian.

353 A space nearly half the size of the house was partitioned off, the half-wall having a doorway. This room was for stores only, clothes etc.; it had a barred window. Besides the hearths, the living-room had hen's nests, stools, baskets, [354] Malia's bed (2 m by 1 m), table, wooden shelves, boxes, and a chest. These last- [197] mentioned objects she had had no difficulty in obtaining from the neighbouring joiner's workshop belonging to the mission.

342 The other *dukaga* is from quite a different district, that of Rungwanio. It was a very long house, as often seen in this locality, 26 metres long. I was told that



The type of house called *duka*, or *ilaw*.

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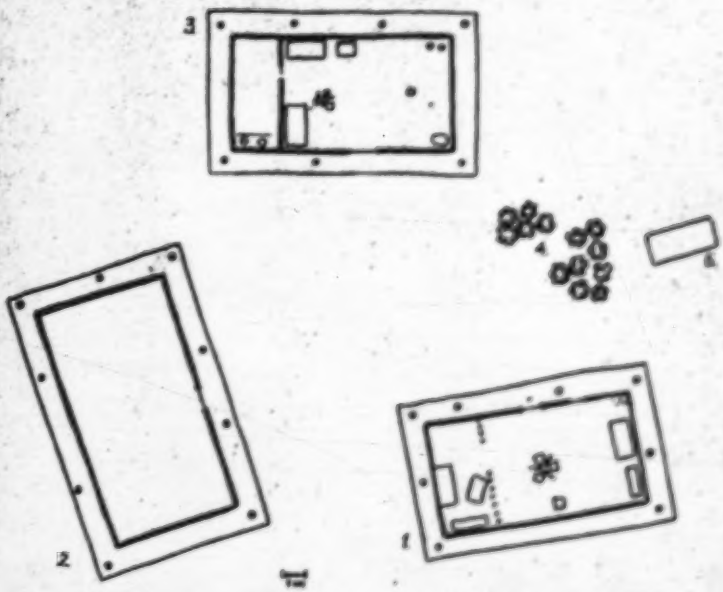

Three houses belonging to one family, situated round a common courtyard; the doors open on to the yard. The village street is along the back of the house at top. 1, Ilelina's house; 2, Raba's house; 3, Idina's house; 4, banana plants; 5, hen-coop.

houses existed which were 60 metres in length. It had the same width as Mafia's house, approximately 5 metres. The roof was supported by posts along the sides and at the gables.

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531]

Two women lived in this house, both married to the same man. Consequently, there were two hearths, the stones of which were cylindrical-conical, broadening slightly at the top. All were decorated. Each woman had her part of the house, both with an outer door, and further there was a door, slightly narrower, between the two parts, and a fourth door to a store-room. No less than twelve posts supported the roof, all reaching to the ridge. The two parts were a bit unequal in size; nearly half of each had the well-known loft for firewood, etc. One part contained beds for the woman and her husband (one bed had 100 straw mats). [353] [351] The children had two beds. The husband had still another house, a short distance away at the foot of a hill, they said. I did not see it. The other woman's room held her bed and a cot.

354

The hearths of both rooms were placed in the centres, between two upright posts. Utensils and furnishings did not differ much from the usual: hen's nests, 352 415

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two water jars, baskets, stools, a ladder leading to the loft, and a table. The rooms were large and spacious, 5 m by 14 m, and in two places low partitions were used to effect a sub-division of the rooms. One may well wonder at the great length of these houses, but probably it is quite true what is said, that, when—in 1897—the Germans took charge of the region and imposed a tax on houses, the Nyakyusa men made their women move in under their own roofs—only at the same time extending the houses, using the technique they already knew from the cowhouses.

Fülleborn reports on this payment of taxes, and finds it reasonable enough, because, he says, "it fosters in the people an understanding of work and discipline," and of the house tax he says, "it works to abolish polygamy, since every woman, following the traditions of her country, has her own house, for which her husband must pay the tax."

But the Banyakyusa seems to have adapted themselves to the new law and have moved their wives to the very long houses, thus escaping part of the taxes...

The third type of house was a rectangular house with a hipped roof. This type is called *ikoma*, which means tent. It was also called *isimo*, the meaning of which I have not been able to ascertain; maybe it means chicken-house, to which it bears much likeness.

This is the modern house-type to which Fülleborn may be referring when he talks about rectangular houses, "... the very rare instances where a hipped roof is seen ..." (page 379).

According to statements made by people who have lived in the district for a third of a century, this type of house is thought to have come from the south some 20 years ago. I have not visited the Ngonde who live further south, but Sir Harry Johnston (1897) depicts a group of people called "Wankonde (North Nyasa)" in front of a house which looks very much like the modern *ikoma* of the Banyakyusa. *It seems therefore reasonable to assume that the roof-construction design of the* Ngonde has now reached the district of the Banyakyusa. Johnston also informs us that the rectangular type is not actually the original type in East Africa, but that it was probably introduced by the Arabs.

This *ikoma* or *isimo* is shorter than the long *ikhaga*; seldom more than 11 metres in length. But its interior design does not differ. For instance, this holds true of the placing of the hearth, of the equal distance between posts supporting the roof, of the bamboo ceiling covering about half the room, of loft-partitions from bamboo and in some cases mud, of store-rooms in the far end of the house, accessible through an inner door.

In an *ikoma* I have never seen more than one hearth, which means that the house is inhabited by one woman. A house in the village of Kibete presented an example of the peculiar tradition of the peoples of the Highlands, viz. the tying of the cattle to posts in the dwelling-houses. My drawings are all from the Highlands, where, in the *ikhaga*, as also noted by Fülleborn, the same tradition is

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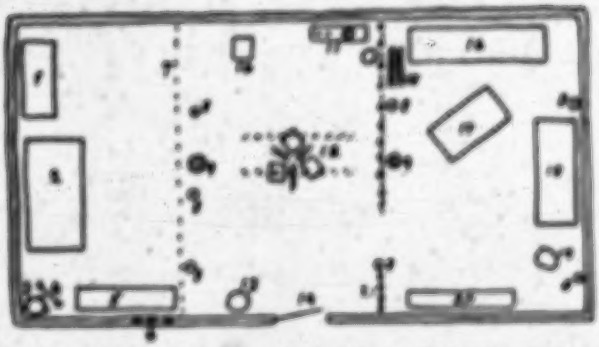

Ivilwe's house. 1, cupboard with shelves; 2, children's bed; 3, host's seat; 4, ladder; 5, room; 6, barred window; 7, fence dotted line towards the right in the bamboo ceiling; 8, from here four 3 horizontal bamboo sticks on which the bamboo ceiling is supported; 9, Posts supporting roof; 10, chair; 11, low shelf with two bamboo jars and a water jar; 12, hearth with three heartstones and sticks under ceiling for carrying the fire basket, and corn-cobs hung up to dry, etc.; 13, love jar; 14, door; 15, mats behind the low partition; 16, shelf for domestic utensils; 17, child's bed; 18, Ivilwe's bed; 19, baskets; 20, domestic utensils; 21, low partition between rooms.

found. In the front part of the Kikole house, serving as an entrance room, were four posts called *ikingi*, to which two cows were tied at night.

This part, which we may call the cookroom, also housed host's seats, the room [33]
and the mortar to be used for maize, etc.

The hearth, consisting of one square and two round heartstones, was placed [354]
in the centre of the living-room part. Here were also water jars and the woman's bed. This means that even if this type of house had a roof of a different shape and was always provided with a verandah with posts supporting its roof, the [542]
interior was really designed on the same lines as the short *ikingi*, but it was meant to house only one woman, or one man, as we shall see below.

We may imagine that one of the reasons why the type of roof was changed, 342
was the weakness of the pointed roof of the ikingi. It could often be seen to have 176
a tendency to fall in, and had to be supported by a post. Even in Fülleborn's illustrations, e.g. plate 64 c, a kind of reinforcement can be seen at the edge of the roof. No doubt the roof of the three does not suffer to the same extent from this flaw.

How houses were being built to this design, and I suppose that a little more 342
than half the number of the houses were of the ikingi type, and a little than half the three.

In the village of Ilolo, I surveyed three houses belonging to one family, a [341]

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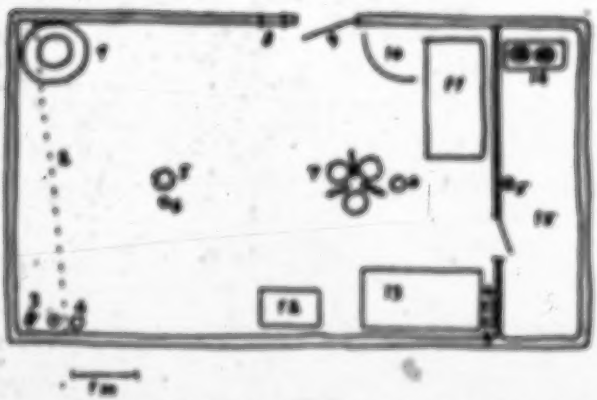


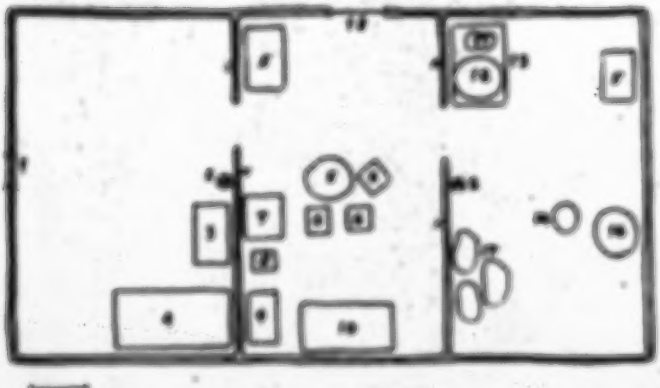
Idina's house. 1, basket; 2, clothes-line; 3, broom; 4, jars, in the back room on low shelf; 5, posts supporting roof; 6, small diagonal bamboo poles, supports for the ceiling; 7, hearth with three round hearthstones; 8, shuttered opening through which the hoh may be reached; 9, door; 10, camera for food; 11, spare bed; 12, table; 13, Idina's bed; 14, shelf for jars; 15, store-room behind mud wall with door.

[344] man and his two wives. The houses were grouped round a common courtyard, the doors giving upon this space and not on the nearby village thoroughfare.

The three houses bore the names of Inchiba's house, Idina's house, and Baba's house. The elder wife, Inchiba, had several minor children, who slept either near her own bed or in the living area. She owned furnishings as modern as a chair and a cupboard with shelves, besides the usual objects in these houses, baskets, bamboo mugs, hen's nest and roost, chicken and water jars. She also had an earthenware beer jar which, one day when I called on her, was standing on the fire, nearly making the froth boil over. She was preparing beer for her husband's friends, who had just dropped in.

The new wife, Idina, had a store-room in her house, and there was also a large heap of cassava, meant for food. As often was in these houses, she had also a guest bed. She had a number of jars and baskets, but no box's nest. Straight across the room she had suspended a line on which she put her clothes. Such an arrangement was often used, especially by the bachelors; they had a line for their skins. Clothes-hangers were not in use. You just threw your clothes across the line. A wardrobe was never seen.

The interior of Baba's house presented a peculiar picture. It was divided into three rooms, a living-area in the middle; at one side the bed-room, at the other a store-room. The bed-room had only one bed and a wooden chest. There was no hearth in the living-room—for the husband had his meals prepared by one of his wives. But there was a true accumulation of tables, chairs, suitcases, and a



Baba's house. 1, barred window; 2, posts supporting roof; 3, wooden chest; 4, Baba's bed; 5, table; 6, chair; 7, cupboard; 8, chair with three suitcases; 9, suitcase; 10, table with books thereon; 11, bags; 12, large baskets, dishes; 13, low stand for 11 and 12; 14, millet jars; 15, low partitions; 16, drums in which the millet is washed; 17, rice in bags.

cupboard. This seemed very strange and a bit disorderly. On a chair were three suitcases on top of each other.

It was interesting to see, in the store-room, the very crops that belong to the men, viz. rice and millet, the most valuable products. The rice was in bags, and it is quite probable that this man had bought it from the districts near Lake Nyasa, where it thrives well. On higher ground, rice cannot be cultivated.

The millet was contained in a basket, 1 m in height, 33 cm broad at the bottom, and narrower, 33 cm, at the top.

Further, there was a large, beautiful earthenware jar, which he had bought. This was intended for the millet. And there was also a cylindrical container for the washing of the millet when it was brought home from the field. This vessel was 33 cm in height and 83 cm across.

All these houses had a small window with bars or shutters.

The inside of the houses lay in semi-darkness, as the only light is admitted through the doorway, and in some cases through the diminutive barred window. Nevertheless, the interiors give a nice impression, because of their tidiness, brightness, and cleanness. And how cosy they are, when seen at night; the door is closed, you gather round the fire and delight in perfectly cooked rice, which is the favourite dish at the principal meal of the day.

Johnston says (1893, page 433) that the greater number of the houses are circular in their plan and very much like beehives in shape; their walls are wickerwork filled with mud, and they have thatched roofs. He also reports

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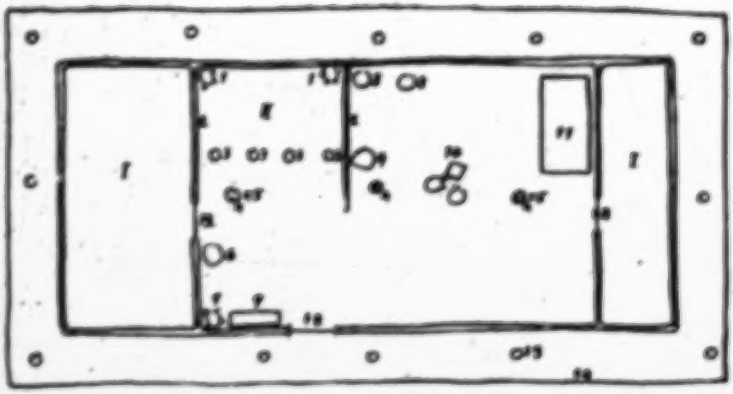

1 m

An *ilowa* from the village of Kibwia. I, store-rooms at either end of the house; II, *entrance* for cattle;—1, bird's nest; 2, low partitions from bamboo; 3, posts for tying two head of cattle; 4, Three posts supporting roof; 5, bow bamboo cups, *calabashes, etc.* were hanging on the posts; 6, wooden mortar for maize; 7, roost from bamboo tied together; 8, water jar; 9, basket; 10, hearth consisting of two round and one square hearthstone; 11, bed of the woman; 12, door; 13, supports for the roof; 14, eaves.—Outer doors from wooden boards; store-room doors from bamboo; bamboo ceiling covers area from half-way partition to the right of cow's manger on to store-room inner wall to the right.

[171] that such houses are found in Africa (a) south of the Zambezi, (b) in all of British Central Africa, (c) in all of East Africa including the Egyptian Sudan,—but not in localities where the Arab influence has introduced the oblong, rectangular building.

342 1971 Now, if we look upon the eastern territories of Africa only—what great changes have taken place there since Johnston's day? The round house is being ousted under foreign influence—Arab as well as European.

If you ask a native of Africa, why he changes the plan of his house, his answer will be, that the rectangular house is easier to sub-divide and better in use—which is most probably true. When first the technique has been adopted, people in other parts of Africa will no doubt abandon the circular design and take up the rectangular.

[171] 342 But nevertheless, the variations in types of hut in Tanganyika are truly amazing; they range from e.g. the fine *ilowa* of the Banyakyusa,—to the rectangular *banda* with nearly flat, clay roof of the Vakimbu,—to the round bee-hives of the Batoni, which may be built in no time on a frame-work of branches and covered with

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gram. This last-mentioned type is used by the Batutsi of western Tanganyika as temporary shelter on their perennial wanderings.

Why, then, do not all tribes build to the same design? There are 120 different tribes in Tanganyika alone, and were you to put the question to a member of one of these tribes, he would simply say, "We follow our custom!"—and this is actually the answer. It takes time to be influenced; people will stick to their old customs,—a fact which, as seen from an ethnographical point of view, is really an advantage. Changes should not come too quickly.

At about the time when Johnston wrote the above lines, the history of Johannesburg as a town had just begun. Now, that city is all grey stone colossi and streets criss-crossing at right angles. Even if the gold was behind all that, you never know when a similar fate may befall some part of Tanganyika. What cannot be called forth by the diamonds to the south of Lake Victoria?

Were the African village to disappear entirely,—it would truly be mined. It is interesting to follow the development which is under way in Tanganyika, and which cannot be halted,—to see how it will influence the charming villages and their inhabitants.

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Aabenraa,
Denmark,
Sept. 1961.

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Nyakyusa

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The chief Mwamasika and his family after he had received from me my old "Klepper-Mantle" as a gift.

to enter his hut, where the patient was sitting on the ground with his back to the wall. To heal his patient of the pains, the doctor made some small incisions in his skin near the stomach by means of a triangular-shaped knife, and then he rubbed in the incisions a thick black juice taken from the horn of an antelope (the horn was called *kapembe*, pl. *ulupembe*). The juice was prepared from different roots and herbs as a medicine against stomach pains. In the horn were certain divisions for other medicines, and in each of these divisions was stuck a small (black) stick for removing the specific medicine from it. After this treatment the patient declared that he felt severe pains in the region of his stomach. I asked the doctor for some of his medicines, but he was unwilling to give me anything. Then I promised to bring him next day some European medicines hoping to get in exchange some of his medicaments.

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The following morning I returned. On this occasion I did acquire some of his medicines in exchange for various European tablets, especially as he was most fascinated with the kaliumpermanganatum,[1] of which I gave him a few crystals, explaining to him the use and the dose; when I dissolved some of the crystals before his eyes, it probably seemed to him to be a mystical process. Among the medicines I received then from him was a medicine for luck, called *kwevusoko*. Some of the inhabitants of the village, who had meantime appeared, were very unwilling for him to give me this medicine, and maintained that I would take with me all the luck of the village.

[777]

On this second visit to the medicine-man, there was again a patient present, and I wanted to take a photograph of the scene because it was

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[1] [i.e., KMnO4. – Analyst]

88| I went to the place and got permission to enter the hut in which the first part of the ceremony took place. I found there the parents of the girl, the girl sitting enveloped in clothes in one corner of the hut, and some older females, one of whom was the acting *unnyago*. Some male guests were also present[20]. As the girl had had her first catamenia the present ceremony marked at the same time the end of her preparation for marriage.

[273 278] The *unnyago* prepared a beverage of beer in which a light-brown medical powder *(imbondanya)* was put. First the girl had to drink from it, then the parents followed. This beverage was believed to strengthen *(ubusisya)* the consumers. Then a spear was handed to the girl by her father, and the girl handed it in turn to some relatives of the bridegroom waiting near the hut. These persons had to bring the spear to the girl's bridegroom as a sign that he could now marry the girl[21], but not before he had brought a bull to the girl's father. After this the girl, now sitting in the middle of the hut, was given small gifts from the participants in the ceremony.

[582 583]

[431]

[291 342 516 868 415]

Practical instruction of premature girls in house-hold matters.

[302] Following this the whole body of the girl was anointed before the door of the hut. The *unnyago* began by anointing her legs; then the girl herself continued it. The ointment was prepared from castor oil [278] and a powder of red wood *(Kipimba*, found commonly in the environment of Lake Rukwa). At this moment a male participant in the ceremony chanced to, come out of the hut, and suddenly a young woman [606]

[20] Cf. Wilson, Introduction, p. 258; The Study of African Society, p. 11 (The Rhodes-Livingstone Paper No. 2, 1939).

[21] *ukwega*: to take (also as regards marrying); *ukwegia*: nuptials.

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sitting there on the yard got up, as quickly as possible held her hands before her eyes and rushed off. This was because this man was her father-in-law. The strict social tabu in such circumstances is well know[12].

The next act consisted in shaving the girl's hair on her temples by the *unnyago;* the father was shaved by a younger brother of his in the same manner. (I cannot remember whether it was also the case with the mother of the girl.)

The old fashioned hut of the chief's wife.

Then the further ceremony took place again inside the hut. All the participants sat down on mats, and the *unnyago* accepted the complaints of the parents on the former conduct of their daughter. Sometimes the discussion between these parties, where the *unnyago* played the role of a mediator as is the case with the *unjobi* (or speaker) in the court, reached such a pitch of excitement that I thought a serious quarrel had broken out. The excitement was, perhaps, only of a ceremonial character; I was told, however, that in former times corporeal punishment has been inflicted, if, indeed, the girl had shown misconduct in the times before.

Next, the girl was instructed by the *unnyago* in her duties as a wife. These instructions were of a theoretical or moral nature concerning the correct conduct of the girl towards her parents also after the ceremony and towards her future husband. The practical part of the initiation instructions sometimes comes before this ceremony at the end of initiation. These practical instructions cover the preparing of food

[12] Cf. *Merensky*, p. 128; *Mackenzie*, p. 108 (at Karonga?). According to *Merensky* the daughter-in-law has to observe this tabu also towards the brethren of her father-in-law. All these persons are named *ukamoona*.

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After these admonitions, the mats which the girl had manufactured were inspected. During this examination it was told her that a wife should be seen in the possession of as many beautiful mats as possible, made by her for herself and for her husband. Should the girl reveal such conduct as a wife, *ubusangalufu* (happiness) would be in her hut.

When the proper ceremony seemed to have come to an end, another discussion followed. The girl had told the *unnyago*, during the above mentioned admonition, that her parents also sometimes exchanged angry words. Therefore, a new discussion between the father and the mother arose, in which also the *unnyago* was the "speaker", but the other participants of the ceremony also shared in it, and the discussion too became at times heated. Still, after about 15 minutes, it suddenly came to an end, and the matter in dispute was declared settled. With this the whole ceremony ended.

8. One day I asked the chief for permission to visit his huts. He dwelt in a rectangular hut (*ikibaja*). A very beautiful *ikitara* (bed) was in the main room, composed of many sleeping mats (*ubuleli*, pl. *imileli*) and of big round wooden blocks (sections of a tree-trunk), one at the head and a smaller one at the foot of the bed. Each of the four fine mats which lay uppermost had a special name. All the mats rested on sticks of reed laid across beams lying on smaller poles on the floor[35]. These mats were naturally of nearly the same height as the wooden block which formed the head part of the *ikitara*. In some other old-fashioned and better houses in Nyakyusa villages, similar beds were to be seen, but generally the bedsteads are much more simple.

One of the most important permissions granted me by the chief was to enter the "store room", connected with his main room by a door. The objects to be seen here were the same as those to be found in other huts or store-rooms, e. g. the big (*ifituba* (baskets) for storing grain, up to four feet high, smeared over with cow-dung and clay, and smaller baskets for different purposes. In one corner hung different kinds of dancing fans (*urukope*, sg.) made of hairs from the tails of bulls, with fine handles of horn. In the dark opposite corner of the same wall there seemed to hang a similar object, but it was wrapped in banana leaf. This was the real sign of the chief's dignity, the symbol of his authority and power, named *ubusungula*. A long discussion was needed to induce the chief to unveil it. Only by constantly consulting by glances the present *amafumu* the chief slowly unveiled it. He told us that

[35] Cf. *Fülleborn*, p. 301.

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342 353 622 778 [775] [824] he had received this object from his ancestors and it must always hang on this spot, as the ancestral spirits *(ubusyuka)*[26] themselves controlled its presence. It consisted of an *unswigara*, i. e. the tail of an ox, but the upper part of it was hollow. In this hollow part medicines *(ifingila)*[27] were kept. Yet another magical medicine, in the shape of a piece of bark of the tree called *Erythrophleum Guineense*[28] was fastened at the upper end of this sign. When my European attendant immediately said to the chief: "And from this piece you make your *mwafi*"[29], the chief exclaimed in astonishment: "*Umne wana Kyara!*" (You are sons of Kyara! i. e. You Europeans know everything.)

After this there was no more delay in revealing to us some more features of this sign of dignity. According to the belief of his fathers this object possessed a special *amaka* (power)[30], e. g. to defeat enemies, if the chief were to hold it directly against them. Also if a thief were [789] to try to enter the room by force, by making a hole beneath the wall of this part of the hut, he would be stricken by power coming from the *ubusisya* and he would have the impression that eyes are directed against him, and so be driven away.

[595] After these interesting communications I went to visit the hut of one of his wives, which still revealed the *isyenga*, the old-fashioned round structure of bamboo poles diverging from their upper end and thatched with grass[31].

241 784 9. The frequent walks in company with the chief or some of his *amafumu* gave me several opportunities for enquiries. On one occasion,

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[26] Cf. Wilson, Burial, p. 9: *unsyuka* (Sing.); Mackenzie, p. 191: *basyuka* (Karonga).

[27] Cf. Mackenzie, p. 275: *ifingira* (Karonga).

[278] [28] The pharmacological substance of the bark (Cortex Erythrophloei, „Sassa-bark") is the alcaloid Erythrophlein which produces the same typical effects on the heart as the Digitalis-group (cf. C. G. Santesson: Pfeilgiftstudien XII. Arkiv för Botanik 27 A, No. 4, Stockholm 1935, p. 6).

[29] Cf. Wilson, Land Rights, p. 32; Merensky, p. 134; Fülleborn, p. 309.

[30] *amaka* is not a specific expression for „magical" or (religious) „supernatural" power, although, from the European standpoint this meaning may be connected with the word in specific cases, but generally it means any striking expression or effect of a quality of a person or object, e. g. *upiki aki ngalimo amaka*, in this wood is power. This word is, therefore, a parallel to the Austronesian, especially Polynesian word *mana*, examined in my treatise „Mana. The term of that what is exceedingly striking". Staatliches Forschungsinstitut für Völkerkunde. I. Reihe. Ethnographie. Vol. 2. Leipzig. 1932. If the Nyakyusa wishes to say that a phenomenon is "supernatural", then he connects it with Kyara, or he names it directly "Kiara" (cf. Merensky, p. 118 [197, 218]).

[31] Cf. Fülleborn, p. 377, fig. 149: Schematical average of a round-hut (as also to be found with the Nyakyusa still today).

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the figures. Also bicycles, aeroplanes, motor-cars and other striking objects of the European civilization are to be found represented and concentric white circles adjacent to these drawings or paintings.

14. Houses. Sometimes the upper portion of the framework of the rectangular houses is not fully plastered with mud leaving broad open areas or strips horizontally or slopingly to the base-line. This may have its origin in an artistic motive and at the same time be useful in ventilating the interior of the hut. The ancient custom of the Nyakyusa to fill out the spaces between the framework of the walls with flat, oval cakes or clods of clay, supported inside the house by a second framework of bamboo *(uvumango)*, has also a decorative effect.

The preparation of those oval sun-dried clay cakes is the work of the women. L. Monteith Fotheringham described this in his "Adventures in Nyasaland" (London 1891, p. 22) with the following words: "The women make the bricks in shape like large eggs by pressing the clay between their hands." The building of the framework of the hut and the thatching of the roof is the task of the men. Nyumba means "the house" in Kinyakyusa as wellas in Swahili; *isyenga* is the name for the old-fashioned hut of the Nyakyusa possessing a round baseline and a framework expanding upwards in diameter. The rectangular hut is called *ikibaga* and the smaller rectangular hut used as a store or a fowl pen, *akabaga*. It is interesting to note that there is no special word for roof in Kinyakyusa. This part of the hut or house is simply called "the above" *(iyuru)*. In contrast to this fact the different poles of the roof-structure are specially named according to their position parallel to or at right angels to the ridge of the rectangular houses. *Ukutalike* means to bind the different rafters of the roof together; *imbanda* is the name for the supporting poles of the roof, and *inyenge* for the poles of the framework of the walls.

15. Outfit. Inside the house we find besides the bedsteads *(ikitara*, pl. *(ifitara)* and the household utensils, the grinding-mill *(urusuara)*, consisting of an upper (smaller) and a lower (broader) stone. The flour falls into a basket placed in front of the mill. Sometimes in a corner of the hut a nest *(ikitero)* for a sitting hen on top of a pole is to be found. Outside the house is a place for the sweepings *(urutagililo)*. The cleaning of the interior of the houses and also the repairing of the mud plaster is the task of the women, but I saw men cleaning the space in front of the huts. At any case, it must be acknowledged that the cleanliness of a Nyakyusa village leaves little to be desired.